

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 18
By Overbey

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of John W. "Jack" Proffitt of Blount County.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of distinguished business leader John W. "Jack" Proffitt; and

WHEREAS, John W. "Jack" Proffitt was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, Jack Proffitt, the son of founder D.W. Proffitt, served with acumen and alacrity as the president of Proffitt's Incorporated for more than two decades, in which position he earned the respect and admiration of his employees and the members of his community; and

WHEREAS, born in Cleveland on September 19, 1919, he relocated to Blount County with his family in November of that year when his father opened the first Proffitt's Department Store in Maryville; and

WHEREAS, educated in the Maryville City School System, Mr. Proffitt attended East Side Grammar School, Maryville Junior High, and Maryville High School before enrolling in Maryville College and graduating from the University of Tennessee with a bachelor's degree in economics; and

WHEREAS, Jack Proffitt began his legendary retail career at the age of 9, working for his grandfather and namesake, John Henry Webb, at Webb's Market Square Store selling ice cream for a nickel a cone and earning twenty-five cents a day; and

WHEREAS, after this initial foray into the world of free enterprise, young Jack Proffitt began working at Proffitt's Bargain Basement for 75 cents a day and, due to his ability and understanding, rose steadily through the company ranks. In 1941, Jack assumed the reins of

the buyer and manager position of the Athens store from his brother Harwell, who had joined the United States Navy, and returned in 1946 to the Maryville store as operations manager; and

WHEREAS, bravely answering the call of his country, Jack Proffitt served in the United States Army for three years during World War II; while stationed at Camp Pickett, he was responsible for elevating the morale of the troops returning from battle. During his period of enlistment he attended Washington and Lee University and Susquehanna University; and

WHEREAS, in 1958, Mr. Proffitt assumed the presidency of Proffitt's, Inc., a position he held for 21 of the 40 years he dedicated to the company. He and Harwell expanded the company to four stores in East Tennessee before selling the franchise to a group of investors in 1984; and

WHEREAS, a respected leader in his community, Mr. Proffitt was a 63-year member of the Maryville Kiwanis Club and served as a past President of both the Maryville Kiwanis and the Maryville Jaycees. He was also a former Secretary of the Athens Kiwanis; Lieutenant Governor of Kiwanis, Region 5; and a former President, Treasurer, and Director of the Knoxville Chamber of Commerce; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Proffitt also issued sterling service as the President and Director of Laurel Lake Wildlife Nature Center, Chairman of Maryville Junior High School Building Committee, Chairman of the Blount Chamber of Commerce County Beautiful Committee in 1959, and as a member of the Governor's Commission for the Smokey Mountains National Park; and

WHEREAS, he lent his considerable energies and talents as a board member for numerous organizations and agencies, including Maryville College, the Blount County Chamber of Commerce, the Maryville Industrial Board, the Maryville Utility Board, the Blount National Bank, Tennessee National Bancshares, the East Tennessee Military Affairs Council, the Knoxville Better Business Bureau, the Knoxville Beautification Board, the Knoxville Opera Company, and the Southeastern Life Insurance Company; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards or accolades, Jack Proffitt was the recipient of the United States Jaycees' Distinguished Service Award and was recognized with Jaycees Life Member Status, the Jaycees Outstanding Man of the Year Award, and the Air National Guard Community Service Award; and

WHEREAS, a member since 1927, Mr. Jack Proffitt was an ordained Elder and Deacon of New Providence Presbyterian Church, which he served faithfully as a Sunday school teacher and as a member of the choir for 25 years; and

WHEREAS, John W. Proffitt was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, proceeded in death by his first wife, Martha Sherer, Mr. Proffitt is survived by his loving wife, Janet Schaffer Copeland; his beloved children, Sherry Bonham, Penny Piper, Mary Gray, and John W. "Woody" Proffitt; his six grandchildren, Amy Gray, Jackie Osterhaus, John Webb Hunter, Grayson Hugh Hunter, Richard Woodfin Proffitt, and Melissa Jayne Proffitt; his four great-grandchildren, Adam and Kristyn Gray Osterhaus and Derek and Sean Proffitt; and his sister, Mary Lillian Proffitt Lyle; and

WHEREAS, Jack Proffitt leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of John W. Proffitt, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Proffitt.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.